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THE STEEL INDUSTRY IN BRAZIL

PIG IRON

According to recent information received, in the first quarter of 1944, metallurgical concerns in Brazil produced 59,242 tons of pig iron, the highest first-quarterly rate since 1940. The output represents an increase of 50% over the same period in the year 1943.

The following figures show the development of the pig iron industry for the five first-quarters since 1940:

1st quarter	Tons
1940	37,632
1941	44,567
1942	43,858
1943	39,454
1944	59,247

Five large smelting plants were responsible for 89% of the total production in the country, as shown below.

1st quarter 1944	Pig Iron (Tons)	Individual Contribution
Cia. Siderúrgica Belgo-Mineira	24,661	41.5%
Cia. Ferro Brasileiro	8,593	15.0%
Cia. Brasileira Usinas Metalúrgicas	8,498	14.5%
Usina Queiroz Junior	7,187	12.5%
Cia. Siderúrgica Barra Mansa	3,397	5.5%
	52,336	89.0%
7 other concerns	6,911	11.0%
TOTAL	59,247	100.0%

STEEL

Steel produced in the 1st quarter of 1944 amounted to 46,957 tons, an increase of 31% over 1943's first quarter. The first-quarterly production of Brazilian steel has been as follows:

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1st quarter	Steel (tons)
1940	31,329
1941	31,637
1942	35,656
1943	35,846
1944	46,957

Five main steel works accounted for 94% of Brazil's total steel production. Their output was 44,087 tons for the first quarter of 1944. Their individual production in the five 1st quarters since 1940 is given as follows:

1st quarter 1944	Steel (tons)	Individual Contribution
Cia. Siderúrgica Belgo-Mineira	25,872	55.1%
Cia. Usinas Metalúrgicas	6,528	14.0%
Cia. Brasileira de Miner. e Metalurgia..	5,790	12.3%
Cia. Navegação Costeira	3,449	7.3%
Usina Santa Olimpia	2,448	5.2%
	44,087	93.9%
7 other plants	2,870	6.1%
TOTAL	46,957	100.0%

ROLLED STEEL

The production here in the first quarter of 1944 was 39,384 tons, or 43.5% above 1943's corresponding period which, however, was the lowest since 1940. The first-quarterly production of rolled steel for the last five years was as follows:

1st quarter	Rolled Steel (tons)
1940	31,464
1941	33,328
1942	35,620
1943	27,455
1944	39,384

Among the 11 steel rolling mills operating in Brazil, the first 5 accounted for 89% of the total production detailed as follows:

1st quarter 1944	Rolled Steel (tons)	Individual Contribution
Cia. Siderúrgica Belgo-Mineira	20,930	53.3%
Cia. Usinas Metalúrgicas	5,545	14.0%
Cia. Bras. de Miner. e Metalurgia	3,636	9.3%
Siderúrgica Itrabila	2,633	6.7%
Cia. Navegação Costeira	2,090	5.3%
	34,914	88.6%
6 other mills	4,470	11.4%
TOTAL	39,384	100.0%

R A M I E

If man had ever previously discovered a simple method for separating the ramie fiber from the stalk of the plant of which it is a part, the history of textiles would have been entirely different. Along with cotton, linen, wool and silk, ramie would have been a common household object, and man's development of artificial textiles would have

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R A M I E

If man had ever previously discovered a simple method for separating the ramie fiber from the stalk of the plant of which it is a part, the history of textiles would have been entirely different. Along with cotton, linen, wool and silk, ramie would have been a common household object, and man's development of artificial textiles would have

been far less necessary. Parachutes made from ramie, for example, are only half as bulky but four times as strong as the silk variety; automobile and truck tires with ramie cords stand up very much better in extreme climates where normal fabric deterioration is considerable; tablecloths of ramie dyed with ordinary cotton dyes assume a richness of hue undreamed of with cottons; fishing nets of ramie outlive the fisherman and frequently his son, too.

In the past, ramie has baffled man's attempt to decorticate it, that is to remove the bark from the stalk. In China, for example, where this fiber has been known for several thousand years and used chiefly as a luxury item, decortication is done by hand, thus barring large-scale production. Where machines have been used previously, they either handled the plant with such vigor as to do permanent physical injury to the fiber, or they did not completely remove foreign substances like the resins which adhere to the fiber during growth, thus making the fiber rather brittle when offered commercially. In any case, the old commercial methods of decortication, far from enhancing the natural fiber, actually presented it as a weaker and less attractive thing than it really is. Small wonder, then, that the public had little interest in ramie.

The lack of success of ramie as a commercial fiber can certainly not be set down to want of trying. Following the collapse of the silkworm craze in both France and the United States in the early part of the nineteenth century, ramie was attempted as a substitute for cocoon silk and as a means of recouping the losses involved in the destruction of the mulberry trees. France offered a prize for the invention of a decorticator, and England, fearing competition to her Lancashire cotton industry, offered a reward, too. Private enterprise financed ramie experiments in the United States following 1855, but these were without success. The slight boom following World War I resulted in finding only one other use for it, namely,- a suitable material for the building of roadbeds.

World War II, with its lightning warfare, with its emphasis on strength in compact space, its need of brand new approaches to time-tested ideas, its discovery of materials little used before, has once again turned the eyes of specialists to ramie. This time, however, instead of the individual inventor using the hit-or-miss method, a battery of trained workers, botanists, agronomists, chemists, engineers, consumer-research specialists and the like were given the problem. The results have been more than encouraging; they are commercially successful.

The plant from which the ramie fiber is obtained is the Boehmeria nivea, a perennial nettle, which, under good conditions, attains a height of eight feet and yields four crops a year. The stalks are hand cut and deleafed and almost immediately put into one of several decorticating machines, which operate chemically and mechanically. Whereas previously all but the fiber was considered as waste, today the by-products are commercially valuable and assist in bringing down the price of the ramie fiber to a point where it competes with cotton and linen in cost.

In Brazil, ramie cultivation developed with the outbreak of the war in 1939, owing to the critical situation arising in the jute market, jute being the material from which coffee bags are made. As a solution ramie was suggested because of the ease with which it can be grown and because of the ability of the shrub to thrive in a soil excellent for coffee without extracting the same elements from it. Results have been so favorable that the plant is now fairly widely planted on the Paulista plateau, and also, though in much smaller measure, in the Amazon basin. Decorticating machinery has been imported, chiefly from the United States, and installed in factories adjacent to the fields where the crop is harvested. The yield of prepared ramie is estimated to be from 400 to 700 lbs. to the acre.

In a comparison with other fibers ramie shows some very interesting properties. It has a greater tensile strength than either flax, hemp, or jute and has more elasticity and ability to withstand torsion than flax or hemp. Cotton is also weaker than ramie in tensile strength but withstands torsion better. Silk, too, is weaker than ramie in tensile strength. Ramie also has the longest fiber of the fiber-yielding plants, 20 inch lengths being not unusual, though a good average is 10 inches. Very little affected by water, ramie is light and cool, washes well, absorbs perspiration quickly and dries quickly.

Today ramie fights in airplane and parachute cloth, parachute cord and webbing, military uniforms and raincoats, tents, hammocks, tarpaulins, knapsacks, belting and cordage, powder-bags, gas masks, absorbent gauze, bandages, surgical dressings, fire hose and tire cords. After the war, ramie will find a use in air-conditioning filters, fish-nets, sails and marine canvas, bond and currency papers, wall-paper, paper for cigarettes, cellophane, typewriter ribbons, conveyor belts, rugs, upholstery fabrics, curtains, mosquito netting, thread, dresses, suits and raincoats, quick-drying underwear, hosiery, towelling and table-linens.

Some of these latter items are available today in products of Brazilian manufacture. A representative of a Brazilian firm interested in ramie is now in New York. Appointments may be arranged by letter through this office.

ADMIRAL JONAS H. INGRAM'S TRIBUTE TO BRAZIL

Admiral Jonas H. Ingram, who until November 15, 1944, was second in command of the Atlantic Fleet with headquarters at Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil, paid a tribute to Brazilian cooperation in the war effort in his statement to the press which was published in The New York Times on January 9,1945, as follows:

"'They turned over everything to us,' he said, 'from raw materials to their Navy. Today they've got a gallant expeditionary force making a whale of a fine record with General Clark in Italy. Those of us who were down there expected that. We got the fullest cooperation from both the Government and the people.'

"He told of how bases for the ferrying of 1,000 planes a month had been made available and declared that the finest ambassadors of good-will we ever had in South America were the personnel who manned those bases.

"'From the northern boundary to Rio, they turned them over to us, and our boys made friends,' he said. 'Some of them even married Brazilian girls. Without those bases and without Ascension Island in the Atlantic, the invasion of Africa would not have been possible. Brazil's example was infectious and we got help, too, from Uruguay and Paraguay. When I left there in November, I don't think our relations with the good neighbors were ever so high. It will be a great field for us after the war.'"

NATAL SERVES AS JUNCTION POINT OF WORLD'S LARGEST FREIGHT AIR ROUTE

An article published in a recent bulletin of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs states:

"Natal, on the bulge of Brazil, is the most important junction point on the largest and most heavily traveled of all global air freight routes extending from Karachi, India, to Miami and New York in the United States.

"Over this so-called 'Main Line' and over lesser global aerial freight routes air cargoes totaling approximately 22,000,000 pounds were flown from remote corners of the world during the period from January 1 to June 30, 1944, for the benefit of the United States and its Allies. Ownership of the materials, valued at $79,000,000, was divided among United States Government agencies (12,000,000 pounds), Russia and the United Kingdom (7,000,000 pounds), and private United States importers (3,000,000 pounds).

"From Karachi, a centuries-old sun-baked port on India's west coast, strategic materials that have been flown over the Himalayan Mountains from China, or which have been obtained in India, are transported by cargo planes across Africa by way of Khartum, the fabled city at the junction of the White and Blue Nile, to Accra, on the African Gold Coast.

"Ascension Island in the South Atlantic, where an airport had to be blasted out of solid rock, is an intermediate point on the air route between Africa's west coast and Natal on the bulge of Brazil.

"At Natal, there are huge warehouses where supplies of strategic materials gathered from China, India, Africa, and South America are stored. These supplies are forwarded to the United States in accordance with monthly quota assignments, degree of priority, and amount of space available on planes of the United States Army's Air Transport Command and the United States Naval Air Transport Service returning to the United States.

"Nearly all of the strategic materials which are flown to the United States from South America pass through Natal. Into Natal by rail also come materials from nearby sources of supply in Brazil. At Rio de Janeiro, farther southward, materials flow into the airport from which two planes daily fly the materials northward to the 'Main Line' at Natal. This branch air cargo line is operated by the United States Naval Air Transport Service. Into Belem, northwest of Natal, special shipments occasionally arrive by way of the Amazon River.

"Four cargo planes a day, operated by the United States Naval Air Transport Service, fly northward from Natal to ports of entry in the United States. The Navy flies about 30 per cent of the South American priority cargo load. About 70 per cent is carried by the United States Army's Air Transport Command planes.

"From Natal the main air route passes northwestward through Fortaleza, Belem and Trinidad, to Puerto Rico. At this point the route branches, and one route, in Navy seaplanes, goes overwater from Puerto Rico to New York via Bermuda. The other, in Army and Navy planes, proceeds northwestward from Puerto Rico to Miami.

"Air cargo traffic to Miami is by far the heaviest, but New York is regarded by the United States War Production Board as the choice port of entry, since it provides direct air delivery of strategic materials to the areas of largest production of electronic and medical supplies.

"One of the four subsidiary routes, accounting for a relatively small proportion of strategic materials carried as priority air cargo, is from the West Coast of South America to Panama. Quinine and totaquine, both obtained from cinchona for use as anti-malarials, are among the strategic materials flown by air from the West Coast of South America.

"Among the South American strategic materials flown to the United States from Brazil are beryl, tantalite, emetine, and mica. Nearly all the quartz crystals, a good part of the tantalite needed for the electronics and synthetic rubber programs, and a growing proportion of the much-needed mica has been moved as priority air cargo to the United States from Brazil. Emetine, obtained from ipecac, is an alkaloid for treatment of amoebic forms of dysentery.

"Without the Brazilian production of strategic materials and the bridge of planes bringing them to the United States," a recent announcement of the War Production Board said, "our war production of top military items would never have been anywhere near to schedule."

AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY - BRAZIL AS A POST WAR MARKET

Decrease in imports during the war, labor shortage, the trend toward modern methods of farming and the industrialization of the country makes Brazil an important potential customer for modern agricultural machinery in the post war market. It is estimated that Brazil will need about 4,500 tons of new equipment annually.

Prior to the present conflict Brazil imported practically all of her farm equipment except walking plows and cultivators, and peg-tooth harrows. However, being unable to obtain machinery from abroad for the past few years, she has been successful in manufacturing many of the items she formerly imported and is now in a position to supply approximately 25% of her own requirements.

Because of the many small machine and blacksmith shops engaged in the manufacture of agricultural implements, it is difficult to state the number of establishments producing such equipment. There are, however, eight firms that are large enough to be classified as manufacturers.

The decline in imports is shown by the following table. It will be noted that 1942 imports are one-fifth of those of 1938.

COMMODITY	QUANTITY IN METRIC TONS				
	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942
Plows	2,121	1,571	487	265	183
Plowshares	9	-	-	-	-
Accessories for plows	230	118	190	120	91
Threshing machines	106	41	14	17	13
Seed drills	75	41	11	7	2
Tractors	2,209	2,739	1,419	304	641
Farm Machinery and equipment, n.e.s	1,518	993	574	637	130
Agricultural apparatus	2	-	-	-	-
Cream separators	58	34	37	48	7
Windmills	45	76	53	69	49
Pumps, n.e.s	373	419	361	472	154
TOTAL	6,746	6,032	3,146	2,939	1,270

BRAZILIAN ALUMINUM INDUSTRY

Despite construction difficulties resulting from wartime restrictions, three aluminum plants are being erected in Brazil. One, in Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, is almost ready to start production, and the estimated yearly output of powdered alumina will be about 10,000 tons. It has 42 furnaces which are expected to produce 2,500 tons of aluminum annually. The second plant is located in Rodovalho, São Paulo, and the third in Campos, State of Rio de Janeiro.

Three large Bauxite mines with an estimated reserve of 1,500,000 tons of ore are located near this plant and will supply the mineral necessary for the manufacture of aluminum products.

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RAW COTTON EXPORTS

During the first three quarters of 1944, Brazil exported 77,562 tons of raw cotton, valued at 469,555,000 cruzeiros. The average price per ton was 6,054 cruzeiros. Practically all the exports were made through the port of Santos, State of São Paulo and the principal countries of destination were Great Britain, Sweden, Colombia, Spain, Portugal and Bolivia.

EXCESS PROFITS TAX

Article 9 of Decree-law No. 6224 of January 24, 1944 has been revised as follows:

" The Board of Assessment of Excess Profits shall be composed of the existing Chamber of Economic Readjustment, supplemented by four (4) members appointed by the President of the Republic, of whom two (2) will be selected from the technical officials of the Ministry of Finance and two (2) from nominees of the Federation of Commercial Associations of Brazil and the National Confederation of Industry, and in addition, one representative of the Exchequer."

For complete text of this law see our Bulletin No. 2, of February 22, 1944, and our pamphlet "Corporations, Labor and Tax System in Brazil."

GOLD - IMPORT LICENSE NOW REQUIRED

The Minister of Finance has been informed by the Export-Import Department of the Banco do Brasil of the order issued establishing a regulation whereby an import license is now required for gold, either in bars, sheets or manufactured articles and art objects. However, exception is made for gold and gold articles already in the Brazilian Custom Houses or in transit.

AMAZONAS JUTE FACTORY

A factory for processing jute produced locally is under construction in Manaus. At a later date the owner intends to establish a weaving plant for the processed Amazonic jute.

S I L V E R

Production of Brazilian silver from 1934 to 1943:

Year	Grams
1934	697,998
1935	647,642
1936	761,995
1937	785,465
1938	794,452
1939	858,264
1940	768,065
1941	658,474
1942	800,393
1943	934,609

TRADE OPPORTUNITIES

The Brazilian Government Trade Bureau has received the following requests from businessmen in Brazil, who desire to export, import or represent American companies for the sale of the products listed below. We suggest that the parties interested write directly to these firms, via airmail, as well as to this office, at 551 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, N.Y.

The Following Firms Wish to Export to the United States:

SEEDS, MANURE, INSECTICIDES - Arthur Vianna & Cia. Ltda., Caixa Postal 3520, São Paulo, Brazil.

"APIS-REUMA" - RHEUMATISM SERUM (made with a base of honey bee venom) - Representações "Apis" Ltda., Caixa Posta 4657, São Paulo, Brazil.

BUTTERFLY WING JEWELRY, ORNAMENTS AND NOVELTIES OF ALL KINDS Americo Formanek, Rua Acre 82, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

BRAZILIAN SHELLAC (made of Pine Resin, used for furniture varnish) - F. Arthur Rischer - Rua Voluntarios da Patria 359, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

CALCITE OF THE ICELAND SPAR TYPE (used in the manufacture of precision instuments and optical goods) - Pan-Minas Ltda., Caixa Postal 1907, São Paulo, Brazil.

BRAZILIAN RUM - Quotation will be given on a basis of FOB Pernambuco or Rio de Janeiro - Alceu Wanderley, Rua Senador Dantas, 41, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The Following Firms Wish to Import from the United States:

HOPS - União Importadora de Bebidas e Fumos Ltda., Rua das Florentinas 176, Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.

AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL MACHINERY; MACHINERY FOR THE PROCESSING OF "AGAVE", MACHINERY IN GENERAL - Companhia Brasileira de Maquinária, Caixa Postal 703, Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.

PULVERIZED COAL FOR MANUFACTURE OF BRIQUETTES - Mr. Domicio Barreto, representing Usina de Briquetagem de Carvão, of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - International House, 500 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N.Y.

DECORTICATING MACHINERY FOR SISAL AND MACHINERY FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF SISAL ROPE & BAGS - Domicio Barreto, representing Sociedade de Instalações Mecanicas Ltda., of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - International House, 500 Riverside Drive, New York 22, N.Y.

MACHINERY FOR MANUFACTURE OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, SPECIFICALLY "TRAFILA" - Would like to receive catalogs. Industria Brasileira de Instrumentos Musicais Weril Ltda., Caixa Postal 480, São Paulo,Brazil.

The Following Firms Wish to Represent American concerns:

PRODUCTS IN GENERAL - Casa Lince, Avenida Celso Garcia, 629, São Paulo, Brazil

Manufacturers and Exporters of RADIOS, WATCHES, FOUNTAIN PENS, CHOCOLATE CANDIES, COSMETICS, MACHINERY IN GENERAL, PHARMACEUTICAL AND CHEMICAL PRODUCTS - Francisco de Assis Leitão, Rua da Imperatriz 1310, Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.

PRODUCTS IN GENERAL - Sociedade Pernambucana de Representações Reunidas Ltda., Rua 1 . de Março 99, Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.

PRODUCTS IN GENERAL - Orlando Araujo, Caixa Postal 622, Bahia, Brazil.

BEVERAGES AND CANNED FOODS - Pierre da Silva & Cia. Ltda., Avenida Graça Aranha, 333, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

LITHOGRAPHING EQUIPMENT - FOR COMPLETE PLANT - Brazilian businessman is interested in buying from the United States - Francisco De Benedictis, Rua Lopes de Oliveira, 615, São Paulo, Brazil